Cleddens Early Years Centre
Day Care of Children

Kirriemuir Road
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
21 May 2026

Service provided by:
East Dunbartonshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003380

Service no:
CS2003016980

About the service

Cleddens Early Years Centre is provided by East Dunbartonshire Council. The nursery is situated adjacent to Thomas Muir Primary School in Bishopbriggs. The nursery is located in a large purpose built unit and children are accommodated in a range of playrooms with a nursery garden and outdoor play area accessed directly from the playrooms.

About the inspection

The service is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 159 children not yet of an age to attend primary school at any one time. Of those 159 no more than 9 are aged under 2; No more than 20 are aged 2 to under 3 and; No more than 114 are aged 3 to those not yet of an age to attend primary school. When using a mixture of the covered outdoor play space and outdoor areas the service can accommodate an additional 16 children aged 2 to those not yet of an age to attend primary school.

At the time of inspection, 109 children were present on the first day and 124 on the second day.
This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 18 and 19 May 2026, with feedback delivered on 21 May 2026. The inspection was carried out by three inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service
- gathered feedback from 26 families through online questionnaires
- spoke with staff
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment.

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure children are safe, the physical environment is well maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

Key messages

- Management and staff engaged positively, embraced feedback and worked collaboratively to identify priorities and agree actions.
- Staff built strong, nurturing relationships with children and families, creating a safe, supportive and positive environment.
- The service showed clear improvement and commitment; however, it should strengthen quality assurance systems to sustain improved outcomes for children and families.
- Children benefited from high-quality, engaging play experiences, with strong practice in the 3-5 room and effective outdoor learning.
- The service should improve consistency in under-three provision and strengthen planning to ensure all children experience rich, developmentally appropriate learning.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

Leadership	4 - Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

Leadership 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

During the inspection, the management and staff team engaged positively. They demonstrated openness to advice and a strong commitment to improvement. The provider supported the process by visiting on the first day and attending feedback, which helped to identify priorities and agree actions. This collaborative approach reflected a shared focus on improving outcomes for children and families.

The service has experienced significant change in recent years, and the progress made was recognised. With a more established management team in place, we suggested continued development of leadership visibility to support confidence and ongoing improvement. Families told us "I've seen a huge improvement since the last inspection. Everybody in that centre has shown a willingness to improve, and I think it's clear that it's because they really care about the children's development". While further progress is required, there was a clear indication this will continue over time.

The vision, values and aims reflected a strong commitment to inclusion and to promoting children's wellbeing. Staff demonstrated a clear focus on supporting each child to achieve their best, with relationships and respect evident across the setting. The vision also highlighted a commitment to positive outcomes for children, families and the wider community.

However, there was scope to strengthen this further by involving children, families and staff more meaningfully in self-evaluation. This would ensure the vision, values and aims remained relevant, embedded in practice and understood by all, supporting shared priorities and sustained improvement. We suggested a more tailored approach should be used to reflect the needs of the setting and the different stages of children's development. This will keep the vision, values and aims relevant and achievable in everyday practice.

Staff told us they took part in self-evaluation during in-service days, with some informal discussions taking place at other times, for example through the open-door policy. We suggested creating more regular and structured opportunities for staff to engage in self-evaluation. We also suggested that management continue to support staff to build confidence and further develop their leadership roles, helping to promote greater ownership and active involvement in improvement.

Following the previous inspection, improving quality assurance had been prioritised. Management worked collaboratively with the senior team and staff to promote a more inclusive approach. While progress was evident, these processes were not yet fully embedded and require time to demonstrate sustained impact. A robust monitoring calendar was in place, with clear roles and responsibilities, and staff contributed positively to this work, particularly through champion roles.

The service should now prioritise monitoring and quality assurance, particularly within the baby room, ensuring that national guidance informs ongoing improvements. Further consideration should be given to the range and focus of professional learning for staff in this area. While training had been undertaken, this was largely focused on breastfeeding. Although important, a broader focus on child development would be beneficial, particularly in relation to developmental milestones, schematic play and the role of the adult in supporting learning and development.

This would support a deeper understanding of practice, encourage active participation and strengthen a sense of ownership in driving continuous improvement. As a result, a stronger culture of reflection and collaboration would be promoted, leading to improved outcomes for children. (See area for Improvement 1)

The staff team were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The service had developed an in-house induction programme, and consideration should be given to aligning this with the National Induction Resource. Staff participated in annual professional reviews. To support consistency and ongoing professional growth, consideration should be given to implementing regular check-ins between management and staff. This would help monitor progress, provide timely support and ensure professional learning was effectively embedded in practice.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's holistic development and to strengthen the staff team's skills, knowledge, and practice, the provider should implement a targeted and robust training and development programme. This programme should address identified gaps in practice and enable staff to build their competence across a range of contexts.
This should include, but not be limited to:

• Child development: ensuring staff have a strong understanding of developmental stages and how to adapt experiences to meet individual needs.
• Meaningful observations and provocations: supporting staff to observe children effectively, use observations to inform high-quality planning, and create engaging provocations that extend children's learning.
• Reflective practice: staff should reflect on training completed and clearly identify how this new learning will influence and improve their daily practice.

This is to ensure that care and support are consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator: Playing, learning and developing

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Within the 3-5 room, staff created a positive environment where most children were happy, engaged and enjoyed their play independently, with peers or with staff support. Children interacted well, formed friendships and demonstrated cooperative play, at times leading their own learning confidently. The woodwork area was a particular strength, offering rich, meaningful experiences; children were observed using tools to create a dice to enhance their games. We recommended this remained consistently available to sustain high levels of engagement.

Children showed respect, kindness and cooperation, engaging in creative activities such as drawing and mark-making, including graduation pictures. Meaningful conversations about home, artwork and shared experiences were evident, with laughter and enjoyment reflecting staff's effective promotion of collaboration and creativity.

Staff provided high-quality experiences across the playroom, including the malleable area, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). These areas were well planned and offered a broad range of experiences which encouraged children to explore, investigate and follow their interests. Provocations such as sand and water play, construction, and opportunities to prepare fresh vegetables in the home corner stimulated children's curiosity, imagination, and sustained engagement. During the inspection, staff adapted areas in response to children's emerging interests, which supported responsive and meaningful play experiences. As a result, children were motivated, confident and increasingly able to lead their own play, make choices and sustain involvement with minimal adult intervention.

Within the 2-3 room, staff were kind, caring and engaging in their interactions. Staff provided a range of interesting, developmentally appropriate experiences. Children confidently explored open-ended and sensory materials such as sand, water, playdough, painting and mark-making. They also engaged with resources for transporting and enclosing.

Staff joined in with children's play and responded well to their ideas, supporting choice, self-expression and language development. They also embedded early literacy and numeracy naturally through songs, stories and opportunities for filling, emptying and mark-making.

However, we observed that this approach was not yet consistent across all under-three provision. We suggested that babies, in particular, would benefit from increased opportunities for heuristic and schematic play to further support curiosity, creativity and independence.

Outdoor play was a key part of children's learning within the 2-5 rooms. Children accessed the outdoor environment independently and moved freely between indoor and outdoor spaces, supporting choice, wellbeing and active learning. The outdoor area provided engaging experiences, including planting, a mud kitchen, balancing activities, creating paintbrushes from natural materials and group games. These opportunities supported children to develop physical skills, curiosity, creativity and enjoyment. Children were active, engaged and confidently led their own play. We suggested that the provider and manager review the baby room garden to ensure it offers a broader range of age-appropriate, stimulating and sensory-rich experiences.

Learning experiences were documented and shared with families through floorbooks and e-journals. Staff demonstrated the use of national guidance, including Curriculum for Excellence. We suggested a greater focus on Realising the Ambition and children's rights to strengthen children's voice and participation and further enhance inclusive practice.

Planning had developed over time but remained an area of focus, particularly in ensuring a fully child-centred approach. Staff required further time and support for this to become consistently embedded. We observed effective support to staff, within the 3-5 room, particularly through guidance and professional dialogue around planning and identifying next steps. We suggested extending this support to the under-threes to ensure developmentally appropriate experiences and meaningful next steps. Overall, planning should continue to be strengthened to ensure sufficient breadth, depth and challenge across the curriculum.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

During the inspection, we observed strong, positive relationships between staff, children, and families. Staff interacted with children in a kind, caring, and compassionate manner, offering cuddles, praise, and reassurance to help them feel safe and secure. Families told us "Cleddens has been an amazing nursery for my child. We as parents feel very lucky for our child to attend such a lovely nursery with amazing/ friendly staff. I feel at ease when my (child) attends nursery knowing (they) are well looked after and having lots of fun. I will be sad for my (child's) time at Cleddens to finish. Thank you to all staff at Cleddens for being so amazing!".

Overall, mealtimes across the service were calm, relaxed and enjoyable. Children were offered choice, encouraged to develop independence and were supported by staff. Menus followed Setting the Table guidance, promoting a balanced and healthy dining experience. Moving forward, we suggested staff consistently monitor and record what children ate to ensure accurate information was shared with families, and to ensure all children received appropriate support during mealtimes. Families told us "I would love if I could find out exactly what and how much my child has ate and drank that day".

We sampled medication held within the service and found that records and storage arrangements aligned with current best practice guidance, Management of Medication in Day Care and Childminding Services. We suggested that outdated paperwork be removed to reduce the risk of confusion. We also recommended that medication records be stored alongside the medication to ensure they were easily accessible and supported safe, consistent administration.

Personal plans were in place for all children, and staff gathered key information to support their health, welfare and safety. Staff identified children's next steps in play and learning; however, we suggested more consistent monitoring by management to ensure these remained appropriate to each child's age and stage of development.

Individual support plans and risk assessments were in place for children requiring additional support. While these provided a useful framework, children's needs were not always fully met. We suggested a more consistent approach, including agreed communication strategies, as practice was not yet consistent across the team.

Although improvements had been made since the last inspection, we recommended that management and staff review care plans and supports to ensure they consistently meet children's needs. Strengthening this approach would help ensure children receive the right level of support at the right time, enabling them to feel secure, included, and fully engaged in their learning.

Staff spoke warmly about family engagement initiatives, including enrolment visits, stay-and-play sessions, parents' evenings and graduations, which appeared well attended. A music workshop held in January was also highlighted as successful, with positive feedback shared by families. This told us that staff valued positive partnerships with families and were committed to promoting engagement in children's learning.

The service continued to explore innovative ways to involve families, for example through the use of QR codes to gather feedback. While we recognise that engaging all families within a large service can be challenging, we encouraged management to continue with their plans to develop creative approaches. This would help ensure all families felt included, informed and able to contribute to their child's experience. Families told us "I have taken part in a parent communication focus group within the nursery, this was a great way to share ideas as a parent directly with the nursery. It also allowed me to feel involved in decisions within the nursery and give opinions on things such as learning journal entries etc. I feel the parents evening this year was also a welcome addition to being able to feel involved directly in my child's learning".

Transitions between playrooms were well planned, with detailed information shared to support continuity of care. Effective communication between staff helped children feel secure and familiar in their new environments. Families told us "My child started Cleddens last year and was nervous, shy and hesitant to begin. The staff at Cleddens have made (child) feel comfortable enough to be (themselves). They champion (child) for what (they) can do and show great care and nurture towards (child). The staff are fantastic, the environment is perfect and I am so glad my child goes to this nursery".

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

To meet children's health, welfare and safety needs, the manager should further develop children's personal plans and identify appropriate strategies to meet children's needs, support progress and help children to achieve their full potential. These plans should be reviewed at least every six months.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.1).

This area for improvement was made on 15 January 2025.

Action taken since then

Personal plans were in place for all children, with staff gathering key information to support their health, welfare and safety. Staff could identify and track children's next steps in play and learning; however, closer monitoring is needed to ensure these are consistently appropriate to each child's age and stage. We recommend that management and staff review current care plans and supports to ensure they effectively meet children's needs throughout their time in the service.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support the service's growth and ensure the best outcomes for children, the provider should take an active role in guiding and effectively managing the new leadership team. This will help sustain and maximise positive outcomes for children, families, and staff.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed (HSCS 4.23), and I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources' (HSCS 4.27).

This area for improvement was made on 15 January 2025.

Action taken since then

The provider has supported the service, with a new management team now in place and making progress. Leadership visibility is developing, helping to build confidence and support ongoing improvement.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure the quality of children's experiences are improved, the provider should implement robust quality assurance processes, including self-evaluation, covering key areas of practice. This should include, but not be limited to, children's personal plans, children's play and learning experiences, staff practice, and medication.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

This area for improvement was made on 15 January 2025.

Action taken since then

A robust monitoring calendar is in place and shared across the leadership team, with clear roles and responsibilities. This is developing into a more inclusive approach; however, processes are not yet fully embedded and will require time to demonstrate their impact.

This area for improvement has been met.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - Good

Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good

Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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